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OUR COMMON LANGUAGE.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes,

Sirs:—"Apart from the usual Americanisms familiar to English readers, there are some novel and amusing expressions in the text. A few which deal with details of costume may be quoted. Thus we hear of 'young women in shirt-waists and sailor hats, and young men in flannel outing suits,' and of 'baskets of freshly laundered clothes,' and of 'a pretty waist of pale silk.' After all, these phrases may be quite native to California, or even to Los Angeles, and have nothing in common with America at large." The *Athenæum*, Sept. 10, 1898.

I send you the above with the hope that some American, versed in the English language, may be willing to translate these "novel and amusing expressions" into the speech which the descendants of Shakespere's compatriots have substituted for that of their ancestors.

But if we do not use their language, they do not think our thoughts; as the following specimen of conjectural semantic from the *Athenæum* of Sept. third may exemplify:

"Dr. is described as 'Instructor in Rhetoric.' Whether this is equivalent to 'tutor' at Oxford or Cambridge, or whether it is a Western title for 'professor' we do not know; but it is possible that, as quack doctors and barbers style themselves 'professors' throughout the West, it may have been determined to substitute 'instructor' for the abused and depreciated title."

Andrew Ingraham.
The Swain Free School.

BROWNE'S REVIEW OF HIMES'S MILTON.

To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes,

Sirs:—It becomes an author, I suppose, when the reviewers are at work upon his books to hold his peace, take the sour with the sweet, and try to learn something from all. But when a direct challenge to explain himself is flung at him he cannot well refuse to take it up. For this reason I notice Prof. Browne's question, though my book itself would answer it for any but a very careless reader.

Before coming to the question, however, I wish to correct some mistakes and misstatements of the reviewer. The one thing that he undertakes to tell us about Milton, namely, that the poet identifies Mammon with Mulciber, is an error. For evidence I appeal to Milton himself and to "his original," Spenser, and not to the commentators. The two spirits are no more identical than the philanthropic millionaire is identical with the architect who constructed the university building in which Professor Browne teaches.

Because the Apocalypse has been a treasure-house for cranks, the critic proceeds on the assumption that any one who finds any truth in that part of Scripture belongs to that fraternity. Milton, however, did not disparage that book, but spoke of it with admiration as "the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy." The reviewer continues to believe "that the narrative in Genesis and the ancient tradition of the fall of the angels furnished the poet with his subject." Why "tradition"? Does not Professor Browne know that this "tradition" is itself drawn from the discredited book? If the "tradition," occupying with its consequences about as much space in the poem as the narrative in Genesis, has been taken from the Apocalypse, why should it be deemed incredible that the outline or germ of the whole poem may be discovered in the same writing? What dictate of good sense forbids accepting the idea of finding here a scheme which subordinates to itself both the story of Genesis and the "tradition"? By the courtesy of the editors I am permitted, if it should seem desirable, to present this matter in a future issue of the Notes.

When the professor begins to quote, I recognize some of my words but none of my ideas. Things are joined that were never intended to be. The reviewer seems to imagine that in presenting the opinions of another a centaur is just as good as a horse and a man. I thought it fairly sane when I said that given Mammon, the spirit of Wealth, and Mulciber, the spirit of Art, and their helpers, the product was Pandemonium, a capitol fashioned after the Roman Pantheon. I thought as much when I declared on abundant evidence that the scenery in the first book of *Paradise Lost* is an imitation of what in Classic times belonged to the west coast of Italy; likewise, when I drew independently from scores of passages all through the poem that Satan was identified with the classical Apollo; likewise, when I